



*The Helena Public Schools educate, engage, and empower each student to maximize his or her individual potential with the knowledge, skills and character essential to being a responsible citizen and life-long learner.*

## Board of Trustees – Special Board Meeting

Friday, March 27, 2020 – 12:00pm

### MINUTES

#### ATTENDANCE

##### *Board of Trustees:*

Luke Muszkiewicz, Board Chair  
Terry Beaver, Board Vice Chair  
Sarah Sullivan, Past Board Chair  
Libby Goldes, Trustee  
Siobhan Hathhorn, Trustee  
John McEwen, Trustee  
Jennifer Walsh, Trustee

##### *Others in Attendance:*

Tyler Ream, Superintendent  
Josh McKay, Assistant Superintendent  
Barb Ridgway, Chief of Staff  
Stacy Collette, Human Resources Director  
Janelle Mickelson, Business Services Administrator  
Tim McMahan, Athletic Director  
Sean Maharg, Special Education Administrator  
Sean Morrison, Special Education Administrator  
Gary Myers, Education Technology Coordinator

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 11:59am by Chair, Luke Muszkiewicz.

#### II. REVIEW OF AGENDA

No changes were requested.

#### III. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were offered.

#### IV. NEW BUSINESS

##### A. Items for Action

##### 1. Consideration and Action on HSD Policy 1900: Temporary COVID-19 Policy

Ms. Ridgway presented two applicable policies for review to the board. The first, Policy 1900 was a policy generated by Montana School Boards Association (MTSBA), to which the district adjusted cross-references to match existing school district policies. According to Ms. Ridgway, this policy was not intended to last in perpetuity – only intended to cope with school closure related to COVID-19. This policy will be posted to the Board of Trustees series of policies and will

have a June 2020 expiration date with the opportunity to extend in case of emergency. Mr. Muszkiewicz and Ms. Goldes expressed their appreciation for the comprehensive review of the issues to be included in the policy. Ms. Goldes moved to approve Policy 1900. Mr. McEwen seconded the motion. There was neither public nor board comment. The motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Consideration and Action on HSD Policy 1901: Use of Transportation Funds

The second policy presented to the board was Policy 1901, which allowed for transportation funds to serve students during school closure. Ms. Ridgway said that while the policy was designed to allow flexibility, details must be determined for how to proceed moving forward. This policy also was intended to expire in June 2020. Ms. Mickelson added that since the policy and associated expenditure was new, it would be closely monitored to ensure proper account coding.

Mr. Muszkiewicz clarified that the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) had established specific guidance related to transportation funds. Ms. Ridgway agreed the policy mirrored both MTSBA policy and OPI guidance.

Mr. Muszkiewicz asked if the policy would allow funds to assist with students who did not have internet access. Ms. Ridgway answered the policy allowed funding for access to the internet and the technology needed for access.

Mr. McEwen asked if the transportation company would be paid when they weren't running routes. Ms. Mickelson answered an addendum would be added to their contract reflecting the services they were to provide and the payment to be made regarding those services. Ms. Ridgway added that, after spring break, buses will be used to deliver meals to students. Dr. Ream said that full funding from the government included transportation, which was intended to keep staff members employed. Mr. McEwen moved to approve Policy 1901. Ms. Goldes seconded the motion. There was neither public nor board comment. The motion carried unanimously.

## 3. Consideration and Action on the District's Remote Services Action Plan for Submission to the Governor's Office

Dr. Ream discussed the remote learning plan, adding there had been very few changes since the draft published earlier that week. Dr. Ream presented the remote learning plan in four sections.

Section 1: Off-site learning and learning instruction. This section detailed the daily expectations of how educators are connecting with students. Two specific pieces were detailed:

- Platforms: 6500 users were engaged on Teams each day.
- Chromebook Checkout: 2,000 Chromebooks had been checked out by students.

Ms. Hathhorn asked for an estimation on the number of students still needing access to the internet. Dr. Ream answered that it wasn't very many. Ms. Hathhorn asked if teachers had been reaching out to students who weren't in communication with them. Dr. Ream replied teachers were reaching out daily.

Ms. Hathhorn asked if students had been able to find exterior information aligning to the curriculum. Dr. Ream answered that some sources had been created by educators and some had been found by the educators that aligned with the curriculum.

Ms. Sullivan addressed the Special Education (SPED) portion of the remote learning plan and noted the district may not be able to meet the needs of some SPED students. Dr. Ream answered that SPED administrators were working on ways to provide compensatory time to meet the needs of all students.

Ms. Goldes asked who was responsible for judging mastery for packets sent home. Dr. Ream answered it was a work in progress, adding some teachers were requesting assignments be posted on Teams – either via a photo or uploaded documents to allow educators to assess assignments.

Ms. Walsh asked about credit expectations. Dr. Ream answered that 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter ended that day. Mr. McKay said principals had been working through the grading process, but there had been question about grading if remote learning continued, including the ramifications for high school if a shift is made from the traditional 4.0 scale and the impact for college-bound students. He continued the key was proficiency flexibility, and grading was a focus in regular discussions among principals.

Dr. Ream detailed Section 2 as a focus on food services. With Sodexo, the district had been thinking through not just how to provide service, but how to work with partners like Helena Food Share to provide food to kids who typically rely upon food packs. Ms. Ridgway added the first day providing food packs for kids utilized the buses to deliver 1200 food packs, make 300 stops, and travel 500 miles. After meeting with the transportation department and the food services department, future pick up sites will be posted.

According to Dr. Ream, Section 3 focused on students who qualified for special services through an IEP, which had been the most challenging aspect for districts across the nation. This section included how to support students to the same level they are used to, available platforms, how para-educators will be utilized, and how to provide an extension of the classroom. Mr. Morrison provided a FAQ document to the trustees. Mr. Maharg added communication had been occurring using whatever platform worked best for the families.

Ms. Sullivan asked if it would be easier to review IEPs to adjust for remote learning. Mr. Maharg answered the SPED staff had been discussing that option with families. Ms. Sullivan asked if there had been consideration of summer school for SPED students. Dr. Ream answered that it could be an option depending on how long the school closure lasted.

Ms. Goldes asked how Explore School had been interacting with students. Mr. McKay answered they were communicating similarly to the district.

Ms. Hathhorn asked about summer school for Title students. Dr. Ream answered it was unclear whether funding would be available.

Ms. Sullivan made a motion to approve the district's Remote Services Action Plan for submission to the Governor's Office. Ms. Hathorn seconded the motion. There was neither public nor board comment. The motion carried unanimously.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 1:14pm by Mr. Muszkiewicz.